

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the purpose and area of the Downtown Specific Plan, its relationship to existing City regulations and plans, and the general provisions of the Plan. This chapter is organized as follows:

- 1.1 What is a Specific Plan?
- 1.2 Specific Plan Area
- 1.3 Purpose of the Downtown Specific Plan
- 1.4 How the Specific Plan Works
- 1.5 Applicability and Conformity with the Specific Plan
- 1.6 General Plan Consistency
- 1.7 Zoning Ordinance Consistency
- 1.8 Relationship to the Riverside Marketplace Specific Plan
- 1.9 Supporting Documents

1.1 WHAT IS A SPECIFIC PLAN?

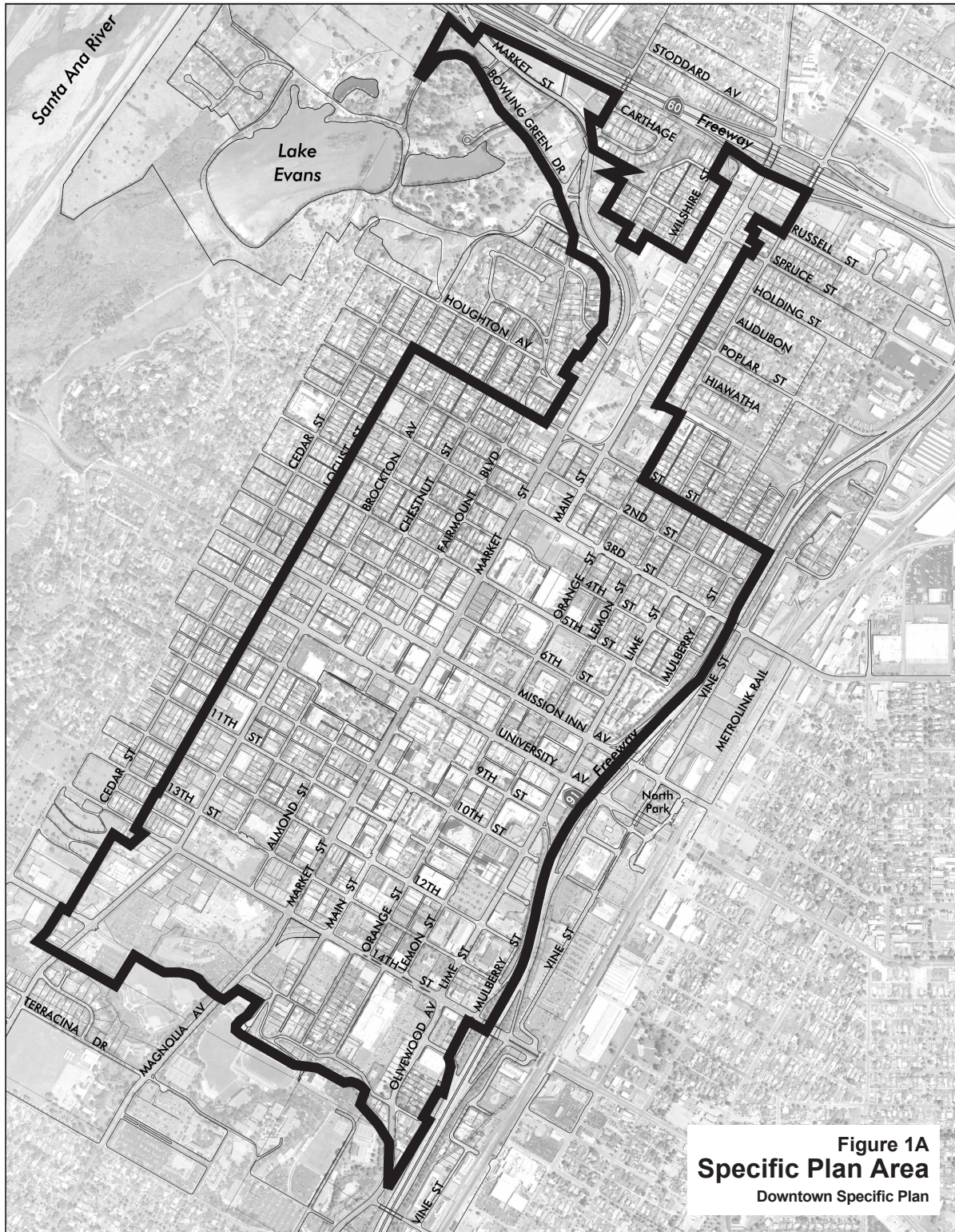
A Specific Plan is a regulatory tool that local governments use to implement the General Plan and to guide development in a localized area. While the General Plan is the primary guide for growth and development in a community, a Specific Plan is able to focus on the unique characteristics of a special area by customizing the planning process and land use regulations to that area. A Specific Plan is enacted pursuant to Section 65450 et seq. of the California Government Code.

1.2 SPECIFIC PLAN AREA

The Downtown Specific Plan area consists of approximately 640 acres located in the north portion of the City of Riverside. The Specific Plan area is bounded by State Route 60 to the northeast, State Route 91 to the southeast, the Brockton Avenue corridor to the northwest, and the Tequesquite Arroyo to the southwest (Figure 1A). Nearly the entire Specific Plan area falls within the Downtown Redevelopment Project Area, with the exception of the blocks between Locust Street and Brockton Avenue, and 9th Street and 14th Street.

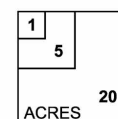
1.3 PURPOSE OF THE DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN

The purpose of the Downtown Specific Plan is to facilitate and encourage development and improvements that help realize the community's vision for Downtown. The Specific Plan is important to the City and its residents because it reinforces Downtown Riverside as the cultural, arts, retailing and entertainment center for the Inland Empire. Based on this Plan, Downtown will also be strengthened as a distinctive center for the citizens of Riverside with attractive streets, enjoyable public spaces, historic neighborhoods, lively mixed-use commercial areas, and a variety of housing options and residential environments.



LEGEND

■ Specific Plan Area



1.4 HOW THE SPECIFIC PLAN WORKS

This Specific Plan is designed to establish a vision and development framework for the Downtown and the means to implement that vision. Implementation will be regulated through detailed development standards, design standards and guidelines, and land use regulations related to this Specific Plan. These important Specific Plan features are consistent with the goals and policies set forth in City of Riverside's General Plan. The Downtown Specific Plan is a tool to create public improvement projects, promote development, evaluate development proposals and facilitate historic preservation.

1.5 APPLICABILITY AND CONFORMITY WITH THE SPECIFIC PLAN

The provisions of this Specific Plan shall apply to all properties included in the Downtown Specific Plan area. No construction, modification, addition, placement or installation of any building structure shall occur, nor shall any new use commence on any lot, on or after the effective date of this Specific Plan, except in conformity with the provisions of this Specific Plan. Legally non-conforming uses shall comply with the Zoning Code regulations.

1.6 GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

To ensure consistency between the Downtown Specific Plan and the City of Riverside General Plan, the General Plan will be amended concurrent with the adoption of this Plan to include a Downtown Specific Plan Land Use Designation to replace the General Plan designations for that area.

This is consistent with General Plan Goal LU5 and associated policies that provide for the use of "Area Plans, Community Plans or Specific Plans" as part of the General Plan to address detailed design, land use and policy direction for a particular area within the City.

1.7 ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY

To ensure consistency between the Downtown Specific Plan and the City of Riverside Zoning Code, the Zoning Map will be amended concurrent with the adoption of this Plan to include a Downtown Specific Plan zone to replace the zoning for that area.

Where land use regulations and/or development standards of the City of Riverside Zoning Code are inconsistent with this Specific Plan, the standards and regulations of the Specific Plan shall prevail. Any issue not specifically covered in the Specific Plan shall be subject to the Zoning Code and/or Municipal Code. Interpretations may be made by the Planning Director or referred to the Planning Commission if not specifically covered in the City's existing regulations.

1.8 RELATIONSHIP TO THE RIVERSIDE MARKETPLACE SPECIFIC PLAN

The Riverside Marketplace is an area adjacent to Downtown Riverside that encompasses approximately 200 acres. It is located southeast of Downtown, separated from Downtown by the Riverside Freeway (SR 91). A Specific Plan was developed for the Riverside Marketplace in 1991 that established land uses, standards and guidelines for development in an effort to redevelop the area. While much of that redevelopment has occurred, a renewed and coordinated focus on this area, in view of changing market potential and recent focus on redevelopment in the Downtown with the creation of this Specific Plan, will encourage even further progress in the Marketplace area.

One of the purpose statements of the Marketplace Specific Plan is to “complement the redevelopment efforts occurring within the Downtown area.” As such, the Marketplace Specific Plan is being updated concurrent with the Downtown Specific Plan to ensure that the land use regulations and goals for the area are supportive and complementary to the Downtown. Having the Marketplace Specific Plan updated, particularly in terms of adding more nearby residential, and possibly hotel uses, will be an encouragement to potential developers and tenants in the Downtown Specific Plan area.

While the Riverside Marketplace is regulated by a separate Specific Plan, the vision, policies and goals for the Downtown and Marketplace area are consistent and compatible, and the two Plans are conceptually and technically interrelated which is important in terms of both the historic and current relationships. Because the relationship between the two areas is vital, the updated Marketplace Specific Plan and Downtown Specific Plan are intended to be adopted and implemented concurrently.

1.9 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Several documents were prepared as background information for the development of the Downtown Specific Plan. These supporting documents are available at the City of Riverside Planning Department and are as follows:

Downtown Riverside Specific Plan, Market Demand and Analysis and Economic Profile
Prepared by Keyser Marston Associates, Inc., November 2000

Overview of Demographic Trends, Downtown Riverside Trade Rings, Riverside, California
Prepared by Keyser Marston Associates, Inc., May 2001

Downtown Riverside Specific Plan, Land Use Analysis
Prepared by The Arroyo Group and CBA, Inc., January 2001

Downtown Riverside Specific Plan, Urban Design Analysis
Prepared by The Arroyo Group and EPT Landscape Architecture, November 2000

Downtown Riverside Specific Plan, Access, Circulation and Parking, Existing Conditions
Prepared by The Mobility Group, December 2000

Downtown Riverside Specific Plan, Cultural and Art Resources Analysis Memorandum
Prepared by Isenberg & Associates, Inc., November 2000

Existing Conditions Report, Comprehensive Downtown Parking Study
Prepared by Wilbur Smith Associates, December 2000

Downtown Specific Plan / Mile Square West Survey Project
Prepared by Myra L. Frank & Associates, January 2002

Downtown Riverside Public Art Profile
Prepared by Isenberg & Associates, Inc., June 2001

